

*C*CHILD *P*OVERTY

report card

2003

manitoba



**The growing minds and bodies of children
should have a first call on our societies and
children should be able to call upon that
commitment in good times and in bad times.**

*Commitment made by Canada and other nations
at the UN World Summit for Children, 1990*

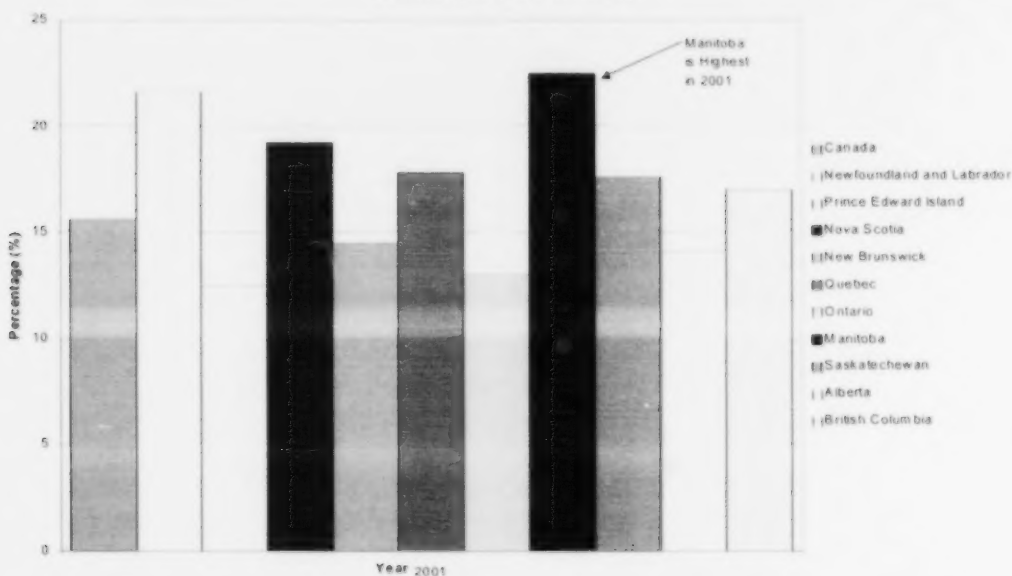
THE 2003 MANITOBA CHILD POVERTY REPORT CARD

Equal Opportunity: Towards Full Inclusion of Children in Our Society

The pervasiveness of child poverty in Manitoba perpetuates inequality of opportunity for many of our children. The negative impacts on their quality of life - healthy development, educational attainment and inclusion and engagement in community - have a ripple effect that is felt throughout our society.

Manitoba's Child Poverty Rate - Highest in the Country

Table 1: Incidence of Low Income (Children Under 18 Years) - 2001
Canada and the Provinces

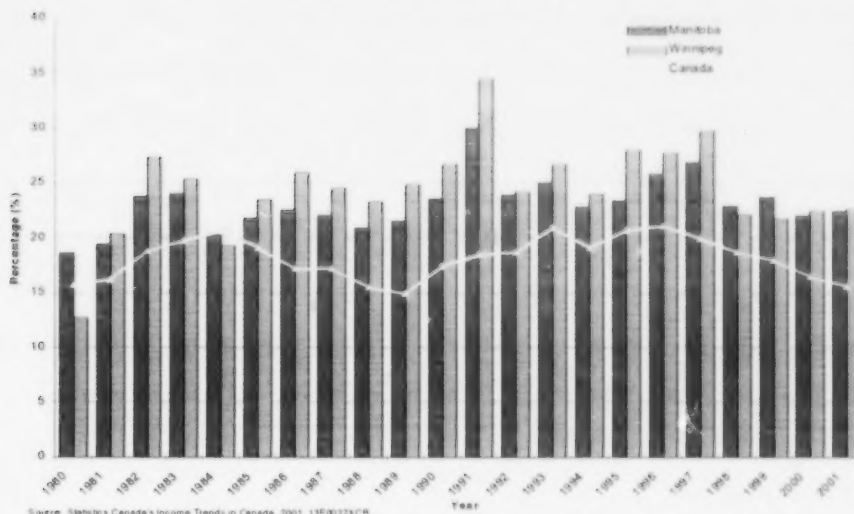


Source: Statistics Canada's Income Trends in Canada, 2001, 13F0022X06

More than one in five Manitoba children (22.5%) are poor. This is almost 7% higher than the national rate.

The Manitoba Child Poverty Rate Stable - While National Rate Decreases

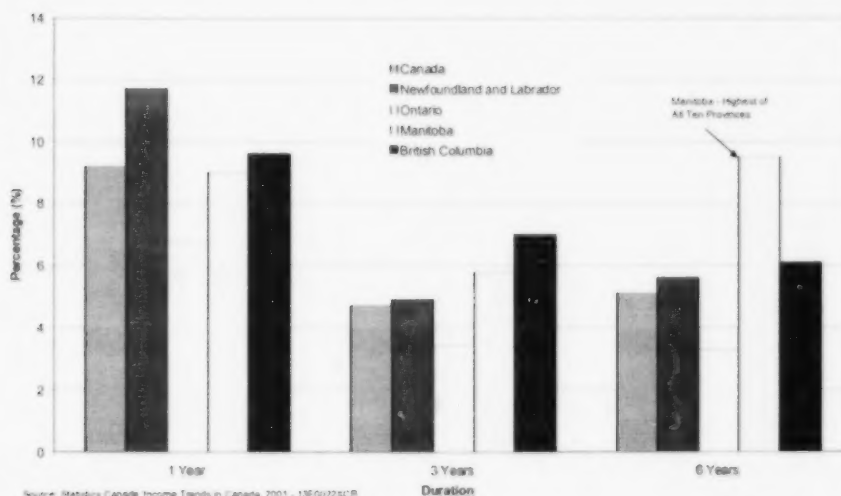
Table 2: Incidence of Low Income (Children under 18 Years) 1980 - 2001
Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg



Since 1995, Canada's child poverty rate has declined by more than 5% while Manitoba's rate has declined by less than 1%.

Child Poverty - A Persistent Problem in Manitoba

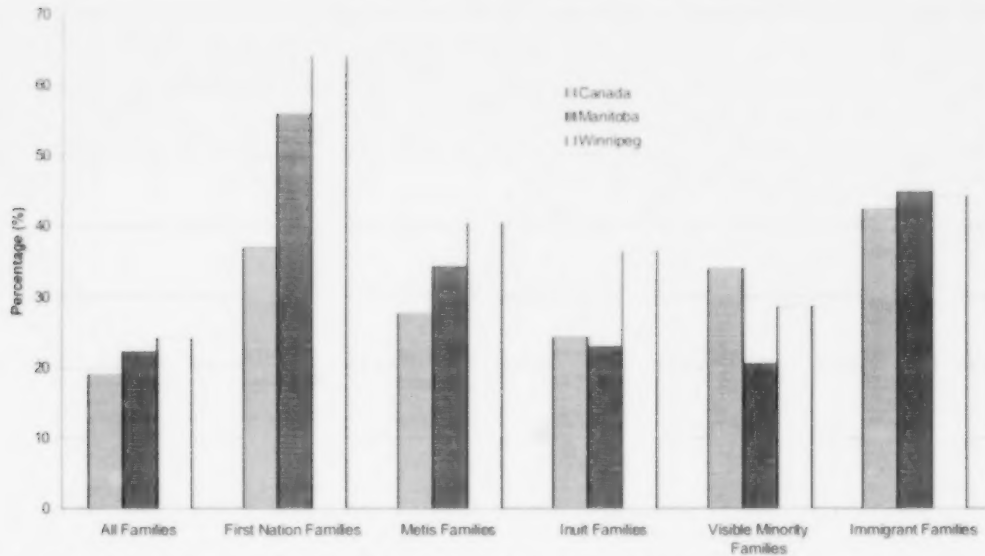
Table 3: Duration of Low Income for Those Found as
Low Income in 2001 (Canada and Selected Provinces)



Manitoba has the highest percentage (9.5%) of households with children that have been poor since 1995.

Some Children Are At Higher Risk of Poverty - Aboriginal, Visible Minority, Immigrant

Table 4: Incidence of Low Income Status Among Aboriginal, Visible Minority and Immigrant Children 0-14 Years of Age - (2000 Incomes)



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001. 97F0010XCB01047, 97F0009XCB01043, 97F0010XCB01043 (Identified as Ethnicity, single and multiple responses)

Children in all families do not experience equal opportunity. Therefore, some children are faced with unique barriers, such as historic and current discrimination and language barriers.

Entrenched poverty in Manitoba requires action at the federal level as well as at the provincial level. Existing public policies do not adequately address the depth and persistence of poverty and its impacts on the lives of many of our children.

The Government of Canada has a crucial role in working alongside provinces/territories to develop and implement strategies to make Canada a country without poverty, where all children have equal opportunity during their lifetime. The Government of Manitoba must also take up the challenge at the provincial level. Needed are policies that empower individuals, families and local communities living in impoverished conditions to improve their circumstances in partnership with other community sectors, including local governments.

What vision do we have for the future of our children?

- Children do not have to suffer the ill-effects of living in poverty.*
- Early childhood education and care is available to give every child a good start in life.*
- Parents and caregivers have income security and good jobs with adequate wages and decent working conditions to be able to support their families properly.*
- Safe and affordable housing is a reality for all children, youth and families.*
- All children live in safe, healthy communities.*
- All children feel included in the community places.*

A Renewed Commitment to Children!

The time for increased action is now. With National Campaign 2000, we call upon the Government of Canada to take action to:

- Develop a new, comprehensive child benefit system with the capacity to reduce child and family poverty significantly and to recognize the cost of raising children for modest and middle-income families.*
- Invest in early childhood education and care - an essential cornerstone of a strategy to reduce poverty.*
- Establish a renewed cross-Canada housing strategy with a substantially increased funding envelope.*
- Proceed with the replacement as planned of the Canada Health and Social Service Transfer (CHST) with two different transfers: A Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and a Canada Social Transfer (CST). The CST can be a driver of policy and funding mechanisms to promote social inclusion in Canada. A key to the success of the CST would be to enhance federal investment in the area of income security by rebuilding the policy framework to creative incentive funding, linking new federal dollars to provincial and territorial actions that bolster social assistance and community-based support services.*
- Establish a cross-Canada commission with the provinces/territories to develop strategies to improve the availability of good jobs with living wages and decent working conditions.*

We call upon the Government of Manitoba to join us in calling upon the Prime Minister for renewed policies and action.

We further call upon the Government of Manitoba to increase the economic security of Manitoba families by:

·Bringing the minimum wage to 60 % of the average industrial wage rate, and increasing the pace at which this is done.

·The minimum wage, once adjusted for inflation, has fallen steadily since the 1970s. If the minimum wage of 25 years ago were adjusted for inflation, it would be more than \$9.25 per hour.

·The next increase in April 2004 to an hourly rate of \$7.00 will benefit many of Manitoba's working poor. Nevertheless, it is still too low to enable many families whose parent (s) or guardian (s) are working at this rate to rise out of poverty.

·Eliminating the \$2.40 daily fee per child for families receiving the full childcare subsidy because of very low income.

·This fee is a hardship for very-low income families whose parent (s) or guardian (s) are working or are in training

·Establishing an earned income supplement for families on social assistance that will continue once they are no longer eligible for assistance.

·This should replace the work incentive program and will also benefit low-income and working poor families.

Endnotes

1. Latest available child poverty data is for the year 2001. Child poverty data prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using Statistics Canada's Income Trends in Canada, 2001, 13F0022XCB. Poor children are those living in families whose total income before taxes falls below the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) as defined by Statistics Canada. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 living with parent(s) or guardian(s), excluding those who are unattached individuals, those who are the major income earner or those who are the spouse or common law partner of a major income earner. Statistics Canada data excludes those on First nation reserves; those in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut; and children living in institutions.

2. Low Income Cut-Offs (LICOs) are adjusted by size of family and community. As an example, the before tax LICO for a lone parent with one child in 2001 would be \$23,551 in a city of 500,000 people or more; \$20,200 in a community with 100,000 to 499,999; \$20,060 in a community of 30,000 to 99,999; and \$18,666 in a community of less than 30,000 people. Visit the Canadian Council on Social Development website for more information about the LICO at www.ccsd.ca

3. Information for Table 4 is from the year 2000 and applies to families with children 0-14 years. Aboriginal ethnic origin refers to those persons who reported at least one Aboriginal origin to the ethnic origin question. Ethnic origin refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which the respondent's ancestors belong. Prepared by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg from Statistics Canada 9750010XCB01043.

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg- a partner with National Campaign 2000

Campaign 2000 is a coalition of over 80 national, provincial and local partners. It was formed in 1991 as a response to the Federal Government's resolution, proclaimed on November 24 1989, to eliminate child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. Campaign 2000 and its partner organizations maintain their commitment to promote and ensure the full implementation of the Federal Government's promise.



The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (SPC) is a membership-based organization in the voluntary sector committed to providing leadership in social planning and effecting developmental, humane and effective public policies.



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